UPC Family Devotional

June – Week 5

Memory Verse of the Week:

“For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listed to his cry for help.” -Psalm 22:24

June 27 Monday Psalms 23:1-6

Arguably one of the most well-known passage in Scripture, this psalm is an expression of confidence in the Lord as it likens His care to that of a good shepherd. God provides for us, ensuring we are nourished and refreshed. God guides us as we journey through this life, not leaving us to figure out the way to go but coming alongside us to help us walk in His will. God also protects us when we are in the dark valley of life, unable to see and constantly surrounded by dangerous threats. We can rest assured that the Lord is always with us and takes care of us. May we learn to follow Him closely.

How has God provided for and protected you recently? What needs or fears do you need to present to Him today?

David’s life was rife with opposition, from rulers to strangers to his own son who conspired and plotted against him. For years on end, he was on the run, hiding in the wilderness. Despite his trials, he views himself as handpicked by God and lavished with an abundance of favor. Like David, we, too, can rejoice in the many instances of God’s goodness and love in our lives. And as we look forward, we see an eternal future in God’s glorious presence. Whether our circumstances are peaceful or tumultuous, let us adopt the same perspective of seeing God’s provision in the present, remembering His goodness in the past, and anticipating our joy in His presence forever.

What do you tend to focus on when you go through difficulties? Take some time to remember how God has shown His goodness to you and thank Him.

June 28 Tuesday Psalms 24:1-10

God is the Maker of heaven and earth. Creation testifies to His unending power and infinite wisdom. He owns every speck of dust and every living thing. But rather than rule ruthlessly over us, He invites us to seek His face and promise to bless those who do so. He has high standards for those who would approach Him, however – standards of inner purity that no sinful human possess. Therefore, God has come to us in Jesus Christ to become our Savior. The blood of Christ cleanses our hands and purifies our hearts. Because of Him, we can stand in the presence of the hold God. Let this truth encourage us to seek His face continually.

What motivates you to seek God? How have you experienced God’s blessing as you seek Him?

Having declared the majesty of God, the psalmist now turns to the temple gates and calls them to prepare themselves in anticipation, hope, and joy. The crowning glory of the house of God is not its rich adornment of gold and precious stones, but the arrival of the King of glory. In our day, an even greater degree of anticipation, hope and joy is fulfilled when the Lord takes residence in our hearts through faith. One day, He will return in royal splendor and take His place of authority over the kingdom of the world and all of creation. As the ancient gates waited for the King, let us prepare ourselves and patiently look forward to His glorious return.

In your current season, what has been your greatest hope and anticipation? How are you awaiting the Lord’s return?

June 29 Wednesday Psalms 25:1-22

David asks God to teach him and to not remember his sins. This gives us an example of how we are to approach God. We need humility to first acknowledge our need of Him so that we can grow in godly character. Having a teachable heart is essential but not always easy, for it often involves being honest with our weaknesses and confessing our sins, asking that God will not count them against us. David is able to trust in the Lord because he has reminded himself of God’s mercy, love, and faithfulness, which He has displayed through the ages. God’s unchanging character and ways give us assurance of His goodness toward us.

Why must one be humble before God? What prevents you from humbling yourself before God?

David pleads with God to forgive his sins. But on what basis does he have confidence that God will forgive? The key lies in his repeated mention of the covenant – God’s promises and plans to bless His people. In Christ, all of God’s requirements are fulfilled and He pours out His favor upon us. While David did not have the full picture of Christ like we do, he trusted that his sins would be forgiven on the basis of God’s promised Redeemer. In light of the forgiveness we have been guaranteed through Christ’s finished work, we should, all the more, come before God to confess our sins and demonstrate a heart of true repentance.

How do you approach God after you sin? How does the gospel change the way you view your sin?

June 30 Thursday Psalms 26:1-12

David asks God to test him. He willingly submits himself to God's examination because he is confident in his relationship with Him and does not want to be associated with the sinful people or their wicked deeds. Rather, he wants his life to demonstrate faithfulness and reflect God's holiness. Like David, we also need to submit ourselves to God for Him to search our hearts. As with any medical examination, this is often an uncomfortable experience, but it isn't necessary and beneficial if we are to root out sins that otherwise goes unnoticed. We may think we know ourselves well, but God knows us better than we know ourselves. Let us present ourselves to God that He may make us more like Him.

What might God discover if you allowed Him to search you? Take some time to ask God to search your heart.

David understands that, more than a building or a physical place, God dwells in the hearts of His redeemed people- those He has delivered from bondage to sin. As David ponders the place where God's glory dwells, he expresses his desire to praise the Lord with other believers rather than seek the company of evil doers. Loving our brothers and sisters in Christ is not an option for us. We must love each other, not begrudgingly or out of duty, but because we long for God to be exalted in our midst. It will certainly not always be easy, but as God’s spirit indwells us, He also pours out God’s love inside our hearts and gives us both the desire and the power to love others.

When is it difficult to love other Christians? How can you develop a greater appreciation and love for your local church community?